

IV C added to reflect
Warsaw 1821

NSC BRIEFING

18 June 1958

Execution of Nagy and Associates

- I. Abrupt announcement made in Budapest on 16 June that ex-premier **Imre Nagy**, General **Maléter** and two of their "closest accomplices" had been executed.
 - A. Nagy was charged with active cooperation with "imperialist" dating back to 1955, to bring about "armed counter-revolutionary uprising aimed at overthrow of the legal order".
 - B. Charges depict Nagy's behavior as proof that tendencies toward revisionism inevitably lead to treason--a clear warning to Gomulka and any potential Gomulkas, that such tendencies can have only a fatal outcome.
- II. Nagy has been in custody since the Soviets struck down ^{HIS} national communist government. As Soviet troops stormed into Budapest the second time on 4 November, Nagy fled to the sanctuary of the Yugoslav embassy, where he received asylum.
 - A. Left his asylum on 23 November upon written assurances to Belgrade, from Kadar, whom Russians had installed as premier, that he could go safely to his home, and that he would not be punished for activities prior to this date.
 - B. Nevertheless was immediately taken into custody by Soviet security forces waiting near Yugoslav embassy, transported to Russian internment. Yugoslavs immediately protested to Kadar and Moscow. This has been a sore point in Hungarian and Soviet relations with the Yugoslavs ever since.

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fought as freedom fighter and who

C. Pal Malster, a Communist colonel who became Nagy's minister of defense was taken into custody while negotiating with Soviet officers, as legal representative of Nagy government, for withdrawal of Soviet forces from Hungary.

III. Signal to execute Nagy almost certainly came from Moscow. Executions indicate serious Moscow concern over revisionism danger and lack of bloc unity on policy toward Yugoslavia.

A. Moscow acted despite undoubted highly unfavorable reactions in uncommitted nations and negative effects on pending talks with West. *are they?*

IV. Communist leaders in Eastern Europe will interpret announcements as call for harder internal policies, Gomulka will be under still heavier pressure to toe the line and to be wary in his relations with Tito.

A. Move will be interpreted by Yugoslavia as deliberately provocative gesture by Moscow. Charges implicate Yugoslavs.

B. Move undermines any connections Kadar may have had with Belgrade, undercuts Kadar's efforts to secure a modicum of popular, party support in Hungary.

1. Kadar's further usefulness to Moscow may thus come into question.

2. Hungarians will certainly interpret executions, charges, as evidence of a ²⁰full return to police terror. Western press reports that people of Budapest have reacted with "stunned silence", shock, surprise, and in some cases, tears.

Not the same as certainty of police terror.

C. Embassy Warsaw reports Polish officials "troubled and disturbed."

subjected to police terror ever since revolution. Plus fact Khrushchev still blasts Rakosi.